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DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING

MEMORANDUM

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MINERALS PROGRAM
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TO: Brad Johnson, Manager
Technical Services Section
Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Waste

FROM: Wayne Thomas, P.E., District Engineer
Division of Environmental Health

DATE: May 1, 1989

SUBJECT: Judco Mining Co. Leaching Operation, Silver Reef,
Washington County

On April 13, 1989 the Judco Mining Co. leaching operation was inspected by the EPA Region VIII emergency response team out of Denver to include Tien H. Nguyen, and Henry Schmelnzer. Also present during the inspection were Mark Taggart from your section, Mr. LaMar Bluth, owner of the property, and myself.

It was apparent during the inspection that Mr. Bluth was not pleased about our presence at the site. It was Mr. Bluth's position that the site is not abandoned and that we really had no business concerning our self with this site, yet he always referred us to Mr. Eldon Pierce when the subject of the contents of the barrels was brought up.

After the inspection and during the discussion between Tien, Henry, Mark, and myself, it is my understanding that unless the site is abandoned, CERCLA cannot get involved with any clean-up activity, and it was not known by any of us if the RECRA program had any authority to deal with this situation. It was decided during this meeting that I would find out what information I could in regards to the position WPC and DOG&M has with this site or any site under a similar situation.

What I have been able to find out about this site after talking with Charlie Dietz of the BWPC and Wayne Hedberg of the DOG&M as well as reviewing the file, is that:

1. The DOG&M has never permitted this operation and would probably take action against the owner if they were to resume operation.

Brad Johnson

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2. The Bureau of Water Pollution Control issued a construction permit in a letter dated April 27, 1983. The permit requires that the tailings be neutralized and redeposited on the original tailings site after the leaching operation is complete. There was obviously an understanding on the part of Water Pollution that once the operation started, it would operate until the leaching process was complete. Even though Water Pollution required a leak detection system under the leach pad there is no evidence that this system has been monitored since the operation began. In a letter dated February 3, 1989 the Bureau of Water Pollution Control requested information about the operation of the system and withdrew permission to operate the facility until an inspection can be conducted to determine compliance with the regulations and authorization to use the facilities is issued. As of this date there has been no response to this letter.

It is my recommendation that a meeting be scheduled between the Bureau of Water Pollution Control, Bureau of S&HW, and the Division of OG&M in an attempt to resolve what can be done with the Judco Mining Company's leaching operation in Silver Reef. My main concern has been the potential danger of the deteriorating drums outside the fence of the leaching operation, and not knowing the contents of the drums. At the very least the Division of Environmental Health, EPA, or DOG&M should require that the contents of the drums be characterized and properly disposed of if necessary.

cc: Bureau of Water Pollution Control
Division of Oil Gas & Mining
Southwest District Health Department